



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 W. Main Street
Boise, ID 83735-0790

TRANSMITTAL #4

MEMORANDUM

June 20, 2002

TO: Workforce Development Council

FROM: Allison McClintick, Labor Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor

SUBJECT: Incentive Awards

ACTION REQUESTED: None. Information Only.

BACKGROUND:

The U.S. Department of Labor, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education, announced that Idaho is one of only twelve states in the nation that have exceeded program performance levels, and is therefore eligible to apply for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) incentive awards under the WIA Regulations.

In order to qualify for a grant award, a state must have exceeded performance levels, agreed to by the Secretaries, Governor, and State Education Officer, for outcomes in WIA Title I, adult education, and vocational education programs. The goals included placement after training, retention in employment, and improvement in literacy levels, among other measures.

Idaho is eligible to receive \$975,500 of the \$26.6 million available for incentive grant awards under the Workforce Investment Act. The awards were created to support innovative workforce development and education activities that are authorized under Title I or Title II (The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) of WIA, or under the Carl Perkins Act. Other states that qualified for the incentive awards include Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin.

The state must apply for funding by June 17th in order to receive the funds. Because the submittal date for the application is prior to the Council meeting, staff developed a consultation and review process to solicit input from the workforce development community and to allow for review prior to submission. The staff will submit a copy of the proposal to the stakeholders for review and comment during the week of June 10th.

In requesting concepts for use of incentive funds, staff requested contributors to consider the following criteria for their proposals:

1. Innovative – Services and activities that are authorized under one of the three acts but go beyond those normally conducted using WIA Title I, ABE or Carl Perkins funding.
2. Comprehensive and Coordinated – Combined activities and services authorized by different programs.
3. Targeted to the needs of those served under the Act – Activities for individuals with a variety of needs and those who may be hard to serve.
4. Targeted to improving system performance – Services that are likely to yield improved performance; e.g., services that will increase literacy levels, employment, academic or technical skills, etc.
5. Statewide – Services or activities that will have broad impact across all regions to improve system performance through new strategies or investments.
6. Investment Oriented/Self-sustaining – Services or activities that are investment oriented; e.g., one-time expenses, investments in technology, training, developmental or other activities that do not require development of new fund sources to sustain the activities.

The draft proposal is attached. Please provide any comments you have on this draft by Friday, June 14th, so they can be considered in the final proposal.

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Attachment

Comments can be submitted to:

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STATE OF IDAHO
PROPOSAL FOR USE OF INCENTIVE FUNDS UNDER SECTION 503
OF THE WIA

1. Contact Information:

Administering Agency:

Roger B. Madsen, Director
Idaho Department of Labor

Carl Perkins subrecipient:

Mike Rush, Administrator
Division of Professional-Technical Education
Amount: \$200,000

AEFLA subrecipient:

Shirley Spencer, Director
Adult and GED Administration
Amount: \$244,000

2. Planned Activities:

In planning for the use of these funds, the State solicited concept papers and considered whether proposals for use of funds were innovative, comprehensive and coordinated, targeted to customers served under one of the three acts, directed toward improved performance, statewide in nature, investment oriented and self-sustaining. Only those proposals meeting these criteria were ultimately considered for funding.

The State of Idaho also identified four priority areas for use of funds. These are improving services for business, building staff capacity, enhancing system capacity and improving customer access. The planned use of these funds is described within the primary strategies listed below. Dollar amounts are estimates.

IMPROVING SERVICES TO BUSINESS – \$251,500

The Governor's Workforce Development Council has identified improving services to business as its first priority. In order to address that goal, the State, under the direction of the Workforce Development Council, is performing a broad based study to determine business needs and priorities for workforce development services. Preliminary results are expected by the end of the calendar year. The State will reserve incentive funds to respond to needs identified in the study. Opportunities will be provided to local *IdahoWorks* Boards, workforce service providers and the education community to propose model services that address

the needs identified in the study that are related to services authorized under WIA Title I, WIA Title II or Perkins III.

BUILDING STAFF CAPACITY – \$210,000

Staff training is crucial for quality service delivery in all program areas. Limited resources prevent both the delivery and attendance at training for some partner organizations. Therefore, the following were considered as priority offerings that will enhance outcomes for the three program areas.

Quality Institute for ABE Teachers and Program Directors (\$80,000) – A comprehensive one-week course would be offered by experts in reading, math, writing and English language acquisition with demonstrations and modeling of family literacy applications and technology. Emphasis would be on research-based methodologies in each skill area. List serves would be established for each area to allow for communication and sharing throughout the year. All costs would be covered for participants, including teacher pay for part-time staff. The institute would be offered under the authority of WIA Title II and contribute toward improved educational outcomes.

Youth Council Training (\$50,000) – While statutorily charged with the responsibilities of planning WIA youth activities, selecting eligible providers of WIA youth services and determining local performance outcomes, Youth Councils are clearly envisioned by legislative authors as a means of facilitating the creation of a coherent, comprehensive youth policy for local communities in each state. Strategies for accomplishing this include increasing awareness of important youth issues, leveraging funds for youth programs from various funding streams to maximize their impact, and motivating communities to improve youth services.

To do this, Youth Councils must be clear about their mission, be fully educated about their responsibilities, be aware of the available resources in the community and be provided the tools to undertake these tasks. We are proposing the use of incentive funds to further build the capacity of local Youth Councils to effectively fulfill their mission.

Workforce Development Best Practices Conference (\$50,000) – Partners in the workforce development system have met together around special topic areas but have not had an opportunity to share best practices in the broader workforce development context. Local workforce development partners have proposed a statewide conference for front-line and management staff in the One Stop system to come together to discuss best practices, particularly those related to integrated service strategies. Scholarships would be provided to ensure that staff from the various partners could attend and share best practices. The conference would further the goals of improving coordination among workforce system partners and satisfaction of customers of the system.

Retention training for front-line staff (\$30,000) – Retention and earnings gains are key performance indicators for the WIA Title I system. Local partners have proposed a statewide conference for front-line staff which would enhance retention and earnings outcomes. The training, authorized under WIA Title I, would address keeping a job, advancing on the job, conflict resolution and planning career moves. The audience would include partners from the One Stop system from across the state.

SYSTEM BUILDING – \$284,000

ABE Design Enhancements (\$120,000) – The limited resources available for ABE instruction often limit opportunities for system improvement. ABE programs in each Workforce Investment Area would be awarded \$20,000 to be used over the two-year period to develop and test new delivery methodologies or service strategies. The programs would utilize the program profiling process developed for the Northwest Regional Consortium Quality Initiative to address innovative services in terms of desired program quality or target group. Initiatives may address such issues as methods for serving the incumbent workforce; methods for identifying and serving an under-served population, community or neighborhood; adaptation and implementation of a particular curriculum; or processes for improved transitions to post-secondary education. The goal of this effort would be to improve educational outcomes for the targeted population or area.

Improved accountability for Adult Basic Education (\$24,000) – A lack of resources has delayed a major purchase of standardized test instruments at the eight program sites. Currently, ABE programs across the state are utilizing different editions and versions of the recommended and required standardized tests. Under this grant, we are proposing to purchase the most current version of forms for the TABE, BEST (for English as a Second Language (ESL) low level learners), CASAS (for ESL) and File-Maker Pro for each site. This would ensure that all programs could provide more precise, consistent and comparable data, create a stronger accountability system and improve information management. This would also facilitate better communication and access to the information management system.

Community Technology Center (\$20,000) – The Adult Basic Education program has received a grant to install community technology centers in rural areas across the state. Under this grant, we would extend satellite reception to other rural outreach sites and complete all centers to their minimum operational level.

One Stop Scholarships (\$120,000) – One Stop system building is often hampered by a lack of resources that would allow partners to co-locate in the six *IdahoWorks* One Stop Centers. We would allow local Workforce Investment

Areas to apply for scholarships to defray the costs of partner programs wishing to co-locate full time in the area *IdahoWorks* Center. This would provide an incentive to partners to co-locate and would expand opportunities for customers by making a broader range of services available on a full-time basis. This is intended to achieve the goal of improved efficiency and better integration of services.

ACCESS – \$230,000

Access is a goal of the One Stop system. In Idaho, this is a critical goal for special populations and our rural citizens. We are proposing three projects which increase system access through better access to services and information.

American Careers (\$150,000) – Parents play a critical role in career decision-making for students. To be effective, they must be well informed about the options and opportunities available to their students. Under this project we are proposing to provide *American Careers* magazines to parents of eighth grade students for the two years of this award. The project, authorized under Perkins III, provides contextual learning materials that support core academic subjects, meets related state standards and national counseling and career development guidelines, and promotes SCANS skills. Available in conjunction with the *American Careers* Planner for eighth graders (provided by the Division of Professional-Technical education from other sources), this project would put high quality, research based resources in the hands of students and parents at important decision-making times. Eighth grade students and their parents would have support in creating the Parent Approved Learning Plan for high school and beyond.

On-Line Health Care Professional Training (\$50,000) – Idaho has created the physical and institutional infrastructure to offer on-line instruction but is currently lacking curricula in this high demand area of health care services. Under this project, we propose to develop curricula for use in the delivery of statewide on-line training in the nursing assistant and EMT/B health care professions. This will bring high quality training to high school students in our more rural areas. The training is authorized under Perkins III but will also be beneficial for eligible WIA Title I younger youth who may have more limited options for occupational skills development.

One Stop Disability Access (\$30,000) – Although the six *IdahoWorks* Career Centers currently meet section 188 requirements, it is our plan to improve access to automated systems in our One Stop Centers. We are proposing to adapt one workstation in each center to be more fully accessible to those with mobility and sight impairments. This will allow more independent access to information and services by those who are disabled. While this is authorized under WIA Title I, improved access to our *IdahoWorks* information system will improve access to all partner programs and services.

3. Improving Performance Levels

Specific goals will vary by project area but will generally influence improved outcomes for all three programs. These are intended to positively impact outcomes over time via improvements in the infrastructure, information dissemination and staff training.

In our first strategy, improving services to business, specific outcomes cannot be predicted until specific projects are developed in response to the business needs survey. However, we can generally assume that a better understanding of business needs is likely to yield improvements in employment and that services adapted to meet those needs are likely to be in areas that would also yield improved literacy and technical skills.

Our second strategy, building staff capacity, contains one project designed to improve literacy outcomes in adult education and a second that is specifically directed towards improved employment retention. While the Youth Council training and the Best Practices Conference do not lend themselves directly to program outcomes, we expect to influence improved outcomes as services are improved at the local level as a result of participation in these training events.

Our third priority, system building, is focused on improving the delivery of literacy services with the goal of improving literacy outcomes. The One Stop Scholarships are intended to increase access by customers to the wide range of services on a full-time basis and to increase system efficiency.

Finally, our goal for access will have indirect links to outcomes by providing better information in career planning for parents and students, increasing access for the disabled to the wide range of services and improving access to training in high demand occupations in rural areas. These will improve school retention, employment opportunities for rural students and transition to post-secondary education.

4. Consultation with Stakeholder Groups

Staff from the Governor's Office, Idaho Department of Labor, Division of Professional-Technical Education, and Office of Adult Basic Education met to establish a process for gathering input into the design of the proposal for use of Incentive funds. Concept papers were solicited from Workforce Investment Boards, Adult Education providers, Community and Technical College leadership and service providers in the One Stop system. A copy of this proposal was also made available to members of the Workforce Development Council, legislative leadership, and to those entities originally contacted for concepts. The final proposal reflects this consultation process and has been agreed to as required by the WIA.